



Our March meeting on the 21st is our Annual Banquet that I hope you are planning to attend. Various committees are working hard to provide centerpieces, awards and camellias for the auction. For you newer members, there is a T. Morris Scholarship which is in honor of the late Ms. Thekla Morris, who provided many resources to the club, including the property of the Shade House. The scholarship named for her will be awarded to a student attending the University of Florida's plant science undergraduate degree program at the UF Milton campus. John Davy and Skip Vogelsong have been selecting some desirable camellias not in our inventory for the auction. One camellia for the auction is named, *Lucky Star variegated*, isn't it unique! You have until the March 16th to contact Bill Lyford at williamtlyford.bellsouth.net to make your reservations; all the details are within the newsletter under Upcoming Events.

Our workday this past week accomplished adding potting soil to the raised beds, which are now ready for root stock. John Mate and Bill Lyford will be completing the irrigation system to these raised beds soon. This will allow the club to a graft some desirable reticulatas that cannot be air layered. 'Frank Houser Variegated' is one that everyone would like to purchase, but must be grafted. Our potted plants have been weeded and are looking great for future sales next fall. The other propagation method is air layering.



Please attend one or more of Greg Taylor's scheduled air layering work days in April. If you do not know how to air layer, still come, we will teach you the skill or you can assist with the steps to this process. Extra hands make the work go quickly. This work is a continuing cycle of production of another year of home-grown camellias that will be sold a year later. This is the least expensive way for increasing our inventory and to fulfill the many requests from members and the general public who are looking for that special camellia.

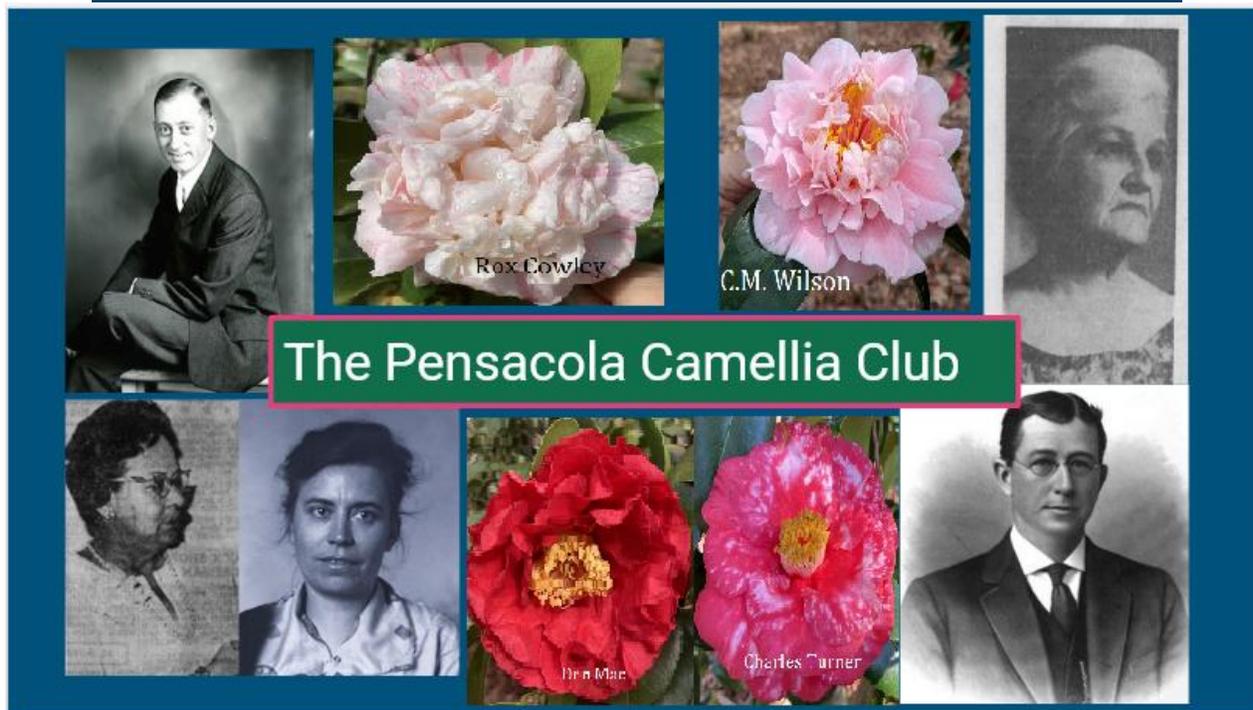
It has been a pleasure to be your President for the past two years. I'm extremely proud of all of you and what we have accomplished as a club. Each individual contributes with enthusiasm and high energy which has made the Club enjoyable throughout all of the work. I enjoy being a part of this club and having been your President. Thanks to all- Trumin Brown

If you missed the February meeting... we went on a historical journey through the lives of five past members of the Pensacola Camellia Club guided by, Jane Benson. Jane did an extensive dive into the life and times of Rox Cowley a photographer, C.M. Wilson an artist, Charles Turner a builder, Sylvia Donahoo and Eva Mae McEvers.

G.H. Wilkinson registered with ACS 'Rox Cowley' in 1953. Mr. Cowley served as PCC President in 1945 along with many other positions within the community of Pensacola. But I don't want to summarize Jane's hard work, you will have to view the PowerPoint on our website for now and wait for an encore presentation.

<https://pensacolacamellioclub.com/pcc-history/>

Who Were These People?



Beside the PowerPoint presentation Jane brought in blooms of Don-Mac from the 'Mother' tree. Art work by C.M. Wilson and other artifacts contributed by member, Richard Freeman to enrich Jane's presentation that was WELL DONE!



Upcoming Events in March & April

Tuesday Mar. 21st – Annual Banquet at V. Paul’s Italian Ristorante, 29 Palafox Place, Pensacola, Florida. Cash bar will open at 5:30pm with Happy Hour prices on alcohol, wine and beer, followed by dinner at 6:30pm. You do not have to be a member to attend; all family and friends are welcome to this celebration. Paul has generously held the price to the same as last year at \$38/per person that includes tax and tip. Please make payment to: Pensacola Camellia Club and mailed to our P.O. Box 707, Pensacola, FL 32591. Reservations can be made with Bill Lyford at williamtlyford.bellsouth.net or reply to this email.



Saturday April 8th - Air layering at UWF Garden starting at 9- 12pm, followed by 1-3pm at Skip Vogelsang’s 4760 Shannon Place. Greg Taylor will bring the supplies needed for air layering: sphagnum moss, rooting hormone powder, Press n Seal, aluminum foil and plant tags. I find a TV tray or small table is helpful. Bring alcohol to clean your tools, pliers or blade to scrap off cambium. Just show up and assist, it will make the task at hand go quickly.

Saturday April 15th - Air layering at John Davy’s 5527 Oakmont Dr. at 9am -12pm and that afternoon we will be at University of Florida Milton campus starting at 1pm. Greg Taylor will bring the supplies: sphagnum moss, rooting hormone powder, Press n Seal, aluminum foil needed for air layering. We find a TV tray or small table is helpful. Bring alcohol to clean your tools, pliers or blade to scrap off cambium. Just show up, it will make the task at hand go quickly.

Saturday April 18th – General Meeting program, David Purdon ‘You need to visit the Magnolia Plantation & Camellia Garden of Charleston SC’. Location: Garden Center, 1850 N. 9th Avenue, Pensacola at 6:30pm for social, 7:00 pm program.

Saturday April 22nd – UWF Camellia Garden Work Day starting at 9:00am to 12:00pm. If you have wondered how to reduce large camellia plants, John Davy will lead a plant reduction demonstration. We will have members on hand to explain air layers and inside pruning of plants before we all get to work at the garden. Come watch and learn so you can improve your own yard with these methods.

We love to hear your camellia stories and / or photos about what you enjoy about camellias or PCC’s events. Please submit to Louise Seitz at pensacolacamellia@gmail.com by the 1st of the month for it to be included in the newsletter.

Our Club has been well represented by Members as they attended other Camellia Shows in 2022- 2023. Greg Taylor was at the Ozone Camellia Club show on Dec 3rd in Slidell LA and came home with a few prizes; runner up for his miniature Pee Wee Var., Best Midium Reticulata with 'Lady Ruth Ritter'



Pictured below are some of Greg Taylor's winning blooms from the New Orleans Show held on Jan 21st, 2023. Skip Vogelsang was there with a few Japonicas, Best Medium Japonica- 'Black Magic' and Medium Runner Up -'Satsuma Kurenai', Best Small- 'Les Marbury', and miniature Runner Up - 'Men's mini Var'. Skip's hybrid 'Dancing Blaze' took runner up in the medium size.

The best tray of three Japonica for the same variety went to Jim DeReuil & Kristin Bennett with 'Royal Velet'.



Feb 4th, Greg Taylor went to the Gulf Port Show and won Best Miniature with 'Pearl's Pet' and Best Species with C. edithae.



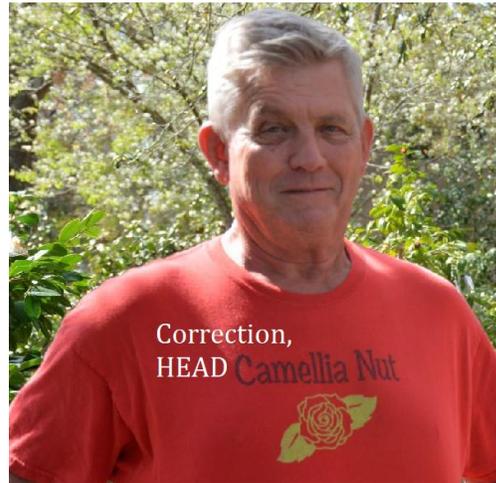
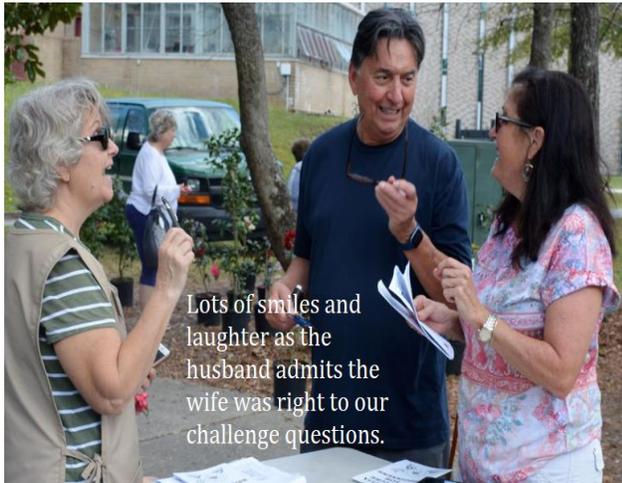
The Big surprise was at the Baton Rouge Show of Feb 11th when **Jim DeReuil & Kristin Bennett won Best in Show with their 'Black Magic'**. They also won Best Small with 'Tudor Baby'. Greg Taylor won Miniature runner up with 'Mikey B' and Best Large Hybrid with 'Taylor's Perfection' and runner up with 'Cile Mitchell'.

March 4th Greg Taylor attended the Fayetteville Show and his 'Mikey B' won runner up in the miniature category.



The first step to having a garden tour is to clean up the place. To the members that came out on Saturday February 25th to clean up the UWF Garden, well done! All of the ugly green weeds were pulled, dead branches collected and path sweep. Extra applaud to those that went to the Shade House afterwards to load the van with plants and needed supplies for Sunday's Tour.

All of the photos from the tour were taken by Ellen Milo and are shared on our website for you to enjoy. Go to our Photo Gallery. <https://pensacolacamelliclub.com/photo-galleries/>





A true Italian,
speaks with
hands



Wow, Mom came all
the way from Canada
to see our garden and
Mike too.



My contact is here somewhere!



Greg doing his magic
with Cindy's help

Firsts.... By Jim DeReuil and Kristin Bennett

Jim and I had a number of "firsts" this camellia season. Our first, Atlantic Coast and Gulf Coast conferences, our first Middle Georgia, New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Brookhaven camellia shows, and our first trip to California camellia gardens and a California Camellia show.

For the New Orleans show we collected and prepared several flowers the night before the show and did a final scan of the garden very early the morning of the show. We entered 2 Trays of 3 of the single variety (Royal Velvet); 1 Nicky Crisp; 1 Black Magic; and 1 Nuccio's Cameo. Royal Velvet treated us well: We won Best Tray of 3! So unexpected and so cool!



For Baton Rouge we entered 1 tray of 3 (Royal Velvet), 2 single Royal Velvet, 1 April Rose, 1 Tudor Baby and 2 single Black Magic. We collected most blooms the night before the show because we had to leave so early the day of the show. The two Black Magic's were not fully opened so we decided to leave them until the next morning. Picture this: 4:00 am, pitch black, rain, 42 degrees looking for the Black Magic plant. Find it and they still aren't open. We have nothing to lose, we collect and prepare it. By the time we got to Baton Rouge, both flowers were perfectly open and perfectly perfect! We also won our first Best in Show. Completely unexpected and completely cool!



Jim judged at all the shows, and Kristin clerked. Camellia people are so nice. We met so many lovely people at every show and look forward to seeing our new friends again. The lessons we learned from competing: always do a final check of the garden the morning of the show (even at 4:00 am in the rain); when in doubt, take the flower; it is ok to be competitive, but it is more important to have fun!

The late February trip to California was full of more firsts. We started at The Huntington Botanical Gardens in Pasadena. It has formal gardens of dozens of species. Huge reticulatas are everywhere and there was zero petal blight. Most of the camellias have a large identification tag which makes viewing the plants and flowers so much more interesting and memorable.



The next day we were excited to start our day at world famous

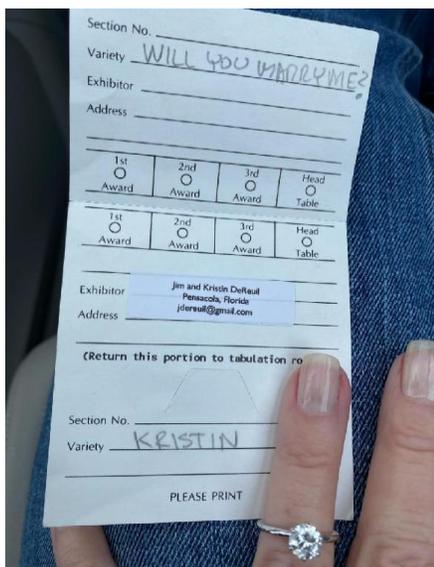
Nuccio's Nursery! Guess what...closed on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Oh well. We drove around the nearby mountains and then headed to Descanso Gardens. Due to rain, sleet, and snow, we had Descanso to ourselves. While both The Huntington and Descanso are amazing gardens, we preferred the less formal and more "rustic" look of Descanso. One of the things we appreciated most about Descanso was the large groupings of camellias. 8, 9, 10 of the same variety grouped together, making it easy to understand the growth habit of a particular to a variety.

The blooms at both gardens were so prolific it is hard to imagine that we were not there at the peak of the blooming season. But as many blooms as there were in bloom, there were that many more not yet open buds on the cusp of bursting forth!

Finally, we made our way to Redwood City to attend the San Francisco Peninsula Camellia Society Show. We had the great fortune of meeting Mr. Don Bergamini, former president of the ACS. He and his family were all so very gracious and welcoming. The flowers at the show were incredible. So large and so perfect. The blooms were of exceptional quality. Here is Bella Jinhua a sport of ' Nuccio's Bella Rosa enter by Don & Joan Lesmeister of Carmichael, Ca. The next photo had a sign that read, 'very large reticulate hybrid >5.5"'.



Our final first: We got engaged!



We so appreciate Mr. and Mrs. Don Lesmeister for helping Jim coordinate a perfect proposal and to the members of the Peninsula Camellia Society for sharing in our joy that morning.

